

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The applicants appreciate Examiner's thorough review of the present application, and respectfully request reconsideration of the objections and rejections in light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Election/Restrictions

In response to Examiner's election/restriction requirement, the applicants hereby affirm the election without traverse of the species of AEO (claims 21-27) for further prosecution. (The invention related to the species of AMO corresponding to claims 1-20 has been filed in a divisional application 11/164,165 with a filing date of 11/13/2005.) Claims 1-20 are hereby canceled.

Regarding the inventorship, the applicants confirm that each of the two originally named inventors is an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Therefore, no amendment of inventorship is needed.

Examiner's Preliminary Remarks

The applicants agree to Examiner's remarks on the term "nanosilica plates" used in the original specification. Accordingly, all occurrences of "nanosilica plate(s)" and "silica plate(s)" in the specification and claims are currently changed to "nanosilicate plate(s)" and "silicate plate(s)", respectively. This results in an amended title of the invention: "Method for Producing Nanosilicate Plates".

Objections to Specification

In response to Examiner's objections to the specification, the specification is currently amended as follows:

- The incomplete sentence "The poly(propylene glycol)-block-poly(oxyethylene glycol)-diamines." on original page 9, 4th line from the bottom, is removed.
- The text "a polymeric exfoliating agent, amine terminating Nannich oligomer (AMO)" on original page 11, 2nd full paragraph, is removed.
- The support in the specification for the temperature range of 25 to 150°C in claim 21

is added to new page 11, 2nd full paragraph. No new matter is introduced since the temperature range was recited in the original claim 21 as part of the original disclosure.

- The support in the specification for “polyoxybutylene diamine” in claim 23 is added to new page 10 as an example of polyoxyalkylene diamine. No new matter is introduced since it was recited in the original claim 23 as part of the original disclosure. The support in the specification for “poly(oxyethylene-oxypropylene) diamine in claim 23 was already recited on original page 10 as an example of polyoxyalkylene diamine. (The extraneous text “polyetheramines” at the end of claim 23 is removed to clarify that “poly(oxyethylene-oxypropylene) diamine is a member of the group recited in claim 23.)

- To provide the support for the molecular weight range of 400 to 4,000 g/mol in claim 22, the text “400 to 2,000” on original page 11 is amended to “400 to 4,000”. No new matter is introduced since the range was recited in the original claim 22 as part of the original disclosure.

- The support in the specification for the molecular weight range in claim 24 is added to the end of new page 11, 2nd paragraph. No new matter is introduced since the range was recited in the original claim 24 as part of the original disclosure.

- The support in the specification for the molar ratio in claim 26 is provided by amending the last sentence of 1st paragraph, original page 7, using the language in original claim 26 with minor syntactical correction. No new matter is introduced since the language was in the original claim 26 as part of the original disclosure.

Claim Objections

In response to Examiner’s objections to the claims, the claims are currently amended as in the foregoing and explained as follows:

- Claim 21 is currently amended according to Examiner’s suggestions under paragraph 9 in the office action. No new matter is introduced.
- The applicants appreciate Examiner’s comments under paragraph 10 in the office action. No amendment is made since no objection is made.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §112

In response to Examiner's rejections under 35 USC §112, the applicants amend as follows:

- The recitations "polyoxyalkylene amine" in claims 21-23 are changed to "polyoxyalkylene diamine" to correct for the indefiniteness. No new matter is introduced because, as Examiner points out, the AEO formula necessarily contains such a diamine.

- Due to the lack of antecedent basis for the terms "said acidified AEO" and "said exfoliated silicate clay" in claim 21, the claim is currently amended, per Examiner's suggestion, to add "to form an acidified AEO" to the end of part (b) and "to form an exfoliated silicate clay" at the end of part (c) to correct for the indefiniteness.

- With respect to the "polyethylene amino group" being inconsistent (since it is not a polyoxyalkylene group) in claim 21, the term "polyethylene amino groups" is changed to "polyoxyethylene groups". No new matter is introduced because the typographical error was apparent from the AEO formula and the change can be supported from the recitation of "polyoxyethylene amine" (namely "polyoxyethylene diamine") in original claim 23.

- Due to the lack of antecedent basis for the term "the mixture" in claim 21, part (d), the claim is currently amended according to Examiner's suggestion.

- In response to Examiner's remark regarding "polyetheramines" at the end of claim 23, the apparently extraneous term is removed per Examiner's suggestion.

- In response to Examiner's rejection of claim 23 because "polyoxybutylene diamine" is outside the scope of claim 21, the phrase "polyoxybutylene groups" is added to claim 21 as an example of R, per Examiner's suggestion. No new matter is introduced because the added example of R is apparent and can be implied from the original claim 23.

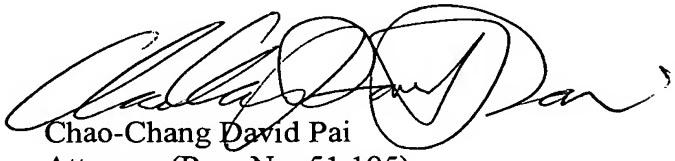
Allowable Subject Matter

The applicants appreciate Examiner for granting allowable subject matter in claims 21-27. The specification and claims have been properly amended to overcome all the objections and rejections as set forth in the office action to capture the allowable subject matter.

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Now that all the remarks, objections and rejections raised by Examiner have been fully considered and responded to by canceling claims 1-20 and amending the specification and claims 21-27 as in the foregoing, the applicants respectfully request that Examiner reconsider the objections and rejections and allow all the claims remaining in this application. The issuance of the Notice of Allowance/Allowability at Examiner's earliest convenience is also respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted:



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